

General Plan Fire Safety Element

Abbreviated Checklist for Agencies

State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection



Purpose and Background: In accordance with Government Code §65302, updates to the housing element of the general plan on or after January 1, 2014 will require a review and update to the safety element. These updates shall address the risk of fire for land classified as state responsibility areas, as defined in Section 4102 of the Public Resources Code, and the land classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, as defined in Government Code (GC) §51177. The State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (BOF/Board) is required to review and make recommendations to the fire safety element of general plan updates in accordance with Government Code (GC) §65302.5.

The below checklist is meant to serve as an abbreviated guide for local agencies updating the safety elements in order to expedite review and revision of the safety element and ensure compliance with the statutory requirements for the Board review and recommendations pursuant to GC 65302.5 (a)(1) and (2), and (b), as follows:

- *“The draft elements...to the fire safety element of a county’s or a city’s general plan...shall be submitted to the Board at least 90 days prior to... the adoption or amendment to the safety element of its general plan [for each county or city with SRA or VHFHSZ].”*
- *“The Board shall... review the draft or an existing safety element and report its written recommendations to the planning agency within 60 days of its receipt of the draft or existing safety element....”*
- *“Prior to adoption of the draft element..., the Board of Supervisors... shall consider the recommendations made by the Board... If the Board of Supervisors...determines not to accept all or some of the recommendations..., the Board of Supervisors... shall communicate in writing to the Board its reasons for not accepting the recommendations.”*

A more comprehensive checklist with comments and recommendations will be provided upon review of the safety element by the Board.

General Plan Safety Element Abbreviated Checklist

The Safety Element must address any unreasonable risks associated with wildland and urban fires.

It shall address

- ☐ Evacuation routes
- ☐ Military installations
- ☐ Peakload water supply requirements
- ☐ Minimum road widths and clearances around structures

as those items relate to identified fire and geological hazards.

It shall contain

- ☐ Fire hazard severity zone maps
- ☐ Historical data on fire hazards (or reference to that data)
- ☐ Information about wildfire hazard areas
- ☐ The general location and distribution of existing and planned land uses in very high fire hazard severity zones (VHFHSZ) and state responsibility areas (SRA), including structures, roads, utilities, and essential public facilities
- ☐ Local, state, and federal agencies with responsibility for fire protection, including special districts and local offices of emergency services
- ☐ Specific goals, policies, and objectives to protect the community from wildfires
- ☐ Implementation measures to carry out the above goals, policies, and objectives including, but not limited to
 - Avoiding and minimizing the hazards to new land uses
 - Locating new essential public facilities outside of high risk area
 - Adequate infrastructure for new developments in high risk areas (including safe access for emergency vehicles, visible street signs, water supplies)
- ☐ Attach or reference the city or county fire plan

The safety element shall support the following 3 findings:

- ☐ The design and location of each lot in the subdivision, and the subdivision as a whole, are consistent with Sections 4290 and 4291 of the Public Resources Code
- ☐ Structural fire protection and suppression services are available for the subdivision through a county, city, special district, political subdivision of the state, or another entity organized solely to provide fire protection services that is monitored and funded by a county or other public entity, or by the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection by contract
- ☐ Ingress and egress for the subdivision meets the regulations regarding road standards for fire equipment access pursuant to Section 4290 of the Public Resources Code and any applicable local ordinances

(Note: These findings shall not supersede regulations established by the Board or local ordinances that provide equivalent or more stringent minimum requirements than those required in this section.)